

**CUSTOMER SELF SERVICE SUBSYSTEM FOR**  
**CLASSIFYING USER CONTEXTS**

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**ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE**

10 A system and method for classifying user context in a customer self service system  
that performs resource search and selection and includes a context attribute database  
comprising types of user contexts and one or more context attributes associated with  
each user context for processing by the system, and context attribute function database  
15 comprising functions for computing values for each context attribute. The classifying  
system comprises a computing device for receiving a user query and a context vector  
comprising data associating an interaction state with the user and, processing the query  
and context vector against data included in the context attribute database and context  
attribute function database for predicting a particular user context. The classifier  
20 populates the user context vector with context parameters specifying a user interaction  
state for use in a subsequent resource search. The result of this invention is an ability  
to relieve the user of the nonproductive work of describing their context and the ability  
to improve the search value by including criteria derived from both data and behaviors  
in the general population which may be unknown to the user. The system and method  
is especially applicable for a self service system in a variety of customer self service  
domains including education, real estate and travel.